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Suggested Activities for Learning About Role Behaviors, Problem Solving and Force Field Techniques.

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Discussions and other activities designed for group learning in the areas of role behaviors, problem solving, and force field techniques are presented in this paper used as material in a workshop for student teachers. Basic to the presentation are the following premises: (1) behavior is controlled by value structure, (2) unstable values may cause changes in a progressive society, (3) communication has the power to control values, and (4) role is related to value judgment and to needs, as well as to status positions which permit one to secure basic needs. Activities (nine) are described. Activities A and B involve listing instances from personal experience related to role determiners; C is a discussion of role theory and conflict; D and E involve discussions on the role of teachers, and on major roles and determiners. Other discussion topics are: F, family problems; G, differences in elementary and secondary school services; H, problem solving steps; and I, using force field techniques in problem diagnosis. Points of departure for discussion are included together with an evaluation form. (AE)

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING ABOUT ROLE BEHAVIORS, PROBLEM SOLVING AND FORCE FIELD TECHNIQUES

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Field Paper 1
1966, Revised 1969

The substance of this paper was reported first in 1966 to the Fifth Annual Fall Conference of the Oregon Association of Student Teachers.

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I. Introduction

A value structure controls an individual's covert and overt behavior. Society can function with stability only when its members have beliefs about common concerns. Among these are (a) the rights of property, (b) the form, prerogatives and limitations of government, (c) the relation of one state to another, (d) the right of owners to choose clientele, (e) the exercise of religious observances and practices, e.g., Bible readings and (f) childrearing in families and societies.

Change may occur in a progressive society when values are not stable. Alternatives to change are confusion and conflict. Danger occurs when conflict and confusion, or mob action, replace traditional beliefs more rapidly than they can be revised and reconstructed. A society that gradually changes values avoids revolution. When there are too many alternate values and nothing is done, a revolution such as the present integration movement takes place. Such a movement indicates reaction to a color line and to the frustrations caused by automation.

Communication has the power to control values. Many people verbalize their reactions to current topics. Professional writers, through syndicated articles and news releases, cause readers to react similarly by using such phrases as "meet the child's needs" and "teach the whole child."

Values, needs and role structures are related. The basic needs of human beings may be classified on five levels: (a) biological necessities, e.g., food, water, oxygen, (b) safety, (c) love and acceptance, (d) self-esteem and recognition from others and (e) self-actualization and self-realization.

For example: to steal bread is a biological reaction; to hide with the bread is a safety reaction; to share the bread is a reaction of love; to feel good about it establishes esteem and deciding to grow food is self-actualization.

Domestic and international legislation indicate an increasing concern with helping people help themselves. This recognizes needs at the biological, safety and self-actualization levels. In many instances people in the United States have a negative attitude toward this kind of help at home and a positive feeling about aid given to people in other countries. What are the reasons for these differences?

Role structure is related to status positions which permit individuals to secure basic needs. The status position is a series of rights and duties; role is the way in which duties are carried out. Role is tied to value judgment. Most supervision is role-biased and value-oriented.

II. Activity A: List instances from personal experience that support 1-3 as major role determiners.
Triad
Time: 30 minutes

Most roles are learned early in life and persist to late life.

Major role determiners are as follows:

1. Family identifies--

   a. Sex roles

      (1) Actions (masculine, feminine)

      (2) Toys

      (3) Habits (haircut, clothing)

   b. Age roles, i. e., actions proper for a specific age period

2. Interaction with others--

   a. Occupational roles

      (1) Supervisor role

      (2) Role playing in youth

   b. Friends

      (1) Body image

      (2) Personality disorders

      (3) Parental control

3. Complimentary roles which help define or limit roles--

   a. Teacher ⟷ Student

   b. Patient ⟷ Doctor

   c. Nurse ⟷ Doctor

III. Activity B: List instances from personal experience that relate to 1-3.
Triad
Time: 30 minutes

Roles are played because they:

1. Help regulate behavior

2. Help interaction with others

3. Help individuals to note role variance

IV. Activity C: Discussion of role theory

Role structures create conflicts when (a) two roles are played simultaneously, e.g., teacher/parent, lay reader/teacher, (b) duties and rights are not clearly defined, e.g., the adolescent watching the younger child in a family because he is an adult, even though he cannot have the family car for a weekend--he is not a child, not an adult and (c) society or family structure changes.

Understanding role structure must be a part of functional supervision programs. Value lag, scientific lag, cultural lag--teachers should be aware of their existence and use this information.

Man is a congregate of roles. Teachers have a preconception of predictable behavioral patterns. They help to explain human behaviors, e.g., creativity: What is it? Is it desirable for a child to be a creative reader?

Following are some value areas that reveal the role of many teachers with students. The values of teachers are closely allied to their roles in school. They react to status symbols.

1.	Occupations	His dad is a doctor
2.	Money	Amount Source (inherited, earned, welfare) Newly rich or traditionally wealthy
3.	Location of residence . . .	Suburban white neighborhood, inner city, ghetto
4.	Education	Number of years Place (teachers' college, liberal arts, vocational school)
5.	Family name	Kennedy, King, Sirhan
6.	Race	Ethnic groups
7.	Speech	Cultured, grammatical errors

Subtle control is used to help maintain role expectancies. It is desirable for children to be independent but if they are too independent and ask too many questions, reward or punishment may be used to control them. It may be helpful to view relationships between the value and historical problems confronting supervisors and teachers using the force field techniques.

V. Activity D: Discussion on role of teachers
Group
Time: 20 minutes

Information about pupils may be obtained in various ways.

1. Objective observation

    a. Valid aptitude and achievement tests

    b. Interpretations of clinical data

    c. Sociograms

2. Natural observation

    a. Teacher observations

    b. Case studies

    c. Autobiographies

Gathering, reporting and recording information about students for their personal teacher usage is an important role of the teacher.

VI. It is suggested that those persons concerned with the pupil's view of classroom activities utilize assessment techniques discussed in Diagnosing Classroom Learning Environments (Robert Fox, Margaret Luszki, Richard Schmuck), published by Science Research Associates, Inc., in 1966.

VII. Activity E: Discussion of major roles and role determiners
Double triads (mixed ethnic groups)
Time: 30 minutes

MAJOR ROLE CHART

Age	Sex	Family			Occupations
All societies recognize age and sex roles		Roles differ in subculture			Other 3 areas affect occupation
		Rich	Middle	Poor	
Children	Male	Young reared by nurse	Child centers (because of this dare not treat him harshly)	Young reared by others	Born into roles (become what your father was)
Adults	Female				Occupational mobility (our students may have to retool themselves)
Aged people (Newest societal group in America)	(Variations exist)				
	Puberty or initiation rites	Marriage for extended wealth	Romantic love concept	Marriage for convenience	Sex differences (more jobs open to both sexes)
	Massive ceremonies create a rapid change from childhood to adulthood	Male dominated	Equal views	Male dominated	New jobs due to technical advancements
	In our society this is not true as we do have a period of adolescence				Role conflicts when new job must be learned
	Women may be received as passive (burdens carried by them, heavy farm work)				
	Aggressive behavior permitted				

VIII. Activity F: Discussion on family problems

Parents and supervisors are confronted by many family problems. They, as well as professionals, should recognize that child-rearing practices do control reactions of the children in various settings. Until the mid-eighteenth century the puritanical parent of New England saw the child as essentially an evil creature who had to have his will broken and corrected. Correction consisted of threats of eternal damnation and whippings which would redirect the child to act as if his main purpose in life was the glorification of God. A Calvinist might view these feelings of childrearing as showing them who is boss.

A major focal point (1795) was the group of thoughts related to Locke and Rousseau. The Spirit of Englightenment created a parental view of the child as weak but not evil. The parental role was to rear the child by preparing him for the hardships of life. Cold baths for children, no socks and being left alone in wooded areas indicated a concern with future fitness rather than immediate comfort. Today children may be asked to do chores above their acceptance level. The Locke and Rousseau view as witnessed in modern living is, "Don't make learning easy because only the hard things are worth learning; prepare them now to serve later."

A trend which developed during the mid- and latter-eighteenth century had a mental hygiene focus. This shift was from the goals for rearing children to methods. Children were supposedly good and would develop if left alone. The permissive child-rearing method was the result of the mental health orientation. The thinking of the time was to keep peace between parent and child.

Everyone has been given the benefit or deficit of one of these three approaches to childrearing. They provide the underlying value base which biases most of what is seen and done. The Calvinistic concept produces the respectful child. The Locke and Rousseau orientation produces an independent and problem-solving child. Mental health orientation strives to produce the well-adjusted child. All can be found in operation throughout the United States.

Each approach did produce behavior necessary for a specific period of time. During colonial times children had to mind quickly. This was due to numerous physical hazards. The Calvinistic approach to childrearing did produce the obedient child. The rugged individual required during our frontier times was prepared by the Locke and Rousseau orientation. Children were taught to meet the rigors of life. The well-adjusted child concept created the adult well suited for the Organizational Man image. But a whole a new approach will be required to produce the child for tomorrow's world. He must accept that all three approaches may be employed by his parents or parental substitutes. He must accept the idea that re-education will be part of his development. The forced gaiety of the retired person of today, his artificial community involvement and his hobby involvement reflect the weaknesses of current child-rearing practices. The modern parent feels insecure because professionals, magazine articles and others sources of communication point to him as a layman in childrearing. Childrearing has been made a frightful task rather than an involvement of love.

It is said that modern mothers cannot rear their children properly. Much is said about women of previous generations and their large families. The truth of the matter is that women of today may not give birth to as

many children, but more will survive the full span from infancy to adolescence. A form of childrearing that works with children ages 1 to 12 may not work with children ages 13 to 17. Parents today are responible for the latter age period. Indeed, they may feel obligated to guide the child through his college years. Parents view the small time span before them as a challenge. It is vital to consider a child's age level.

As demands of childrearing expanded, the resources of family personnel diminished. This was--and is--unfortunate. There are many part-time fathers who may be overly compensatory during brief encounters with their children. These fathers may be under extreme tension when they arrive home. So are the mothers. The males have half-spent aggressions. The mothers have need for affection. This situation often results in a nightly disagreement. The parent who requires the extra attention eventually gives in and children are exposed to multiple expectancies from authority figures. Mothers need groups that reinforce their concepts of childrearing. They have lost faith in their own ability. When mothers and fathers lose too much self-confidence by lack of employment, poor self-image concepts or other sociological and psychological factors, children reflect the resultant parental hostility.

Total responsibility and authority in matters of childrearing have been forced upon mothers. Many factors have converged to make the responsibility difficult to bear and authority difficult to exercise. Total responsibility is always frightening and some representatives of childrearing professions have contributed substantially to making it a heavy burden. It is not enough that the father's daily morning departure has left the job to her; child guidance experts and psychiatrists of national prestige have accused her of botching the job. In the period between

1930 and 1950 child guidance clinics routinely insisted on treating only the mother and child. This indicated to the mother that she was in all likelihood the only parent who was damaging the child. Left with the unenviable task of having to call the signals, she was accused of being dominant, masculine and loud-voiced. She supposedly either bound her children to her in unhealthy emotional entrapment or rejected and starved them in their need for emotional warmth. The child received no help in developing self-confidence and a positive self-image. Dr. Strecker's conceptualization of "Momism" has added to our everyday language a term derogatory to motherhood. Not many people have stopped to think whether the maternal behavior thus decried is a matter of choice in modern society. Nor have they, with the exception of Erickson, stopped to think whether or not the emotionally unattached personality is a necessity in our corporate society. Many people must uproot themselves and their children to move to places of promotion and economic opportunity. Teachers often are not from the geographical area in which they teach. Parents and teachers must be trained to live with uncertainty.

Child-rearing responsibilities of parents in the United States have been strained by (a) persistent and frequently rapid change in prevalent and professionally-supported ideas about childrearing, (b) a decline in the birth and death rates, (c) the absence of the father from home, (d) the interchangeability of parental roles between the sexes and (e) the social development of the status and roles of women in America. Unfortunately, this strain is due to social conditions over which the individual parent has no control. It is made even more difficult by certain psychological implications of the task. Six generations of parents have defined their duty...<u>to help their children get better educations than they have</u>

attained. On the conscious level this seems to be benevolent. It displays readiness for sacrifice. It could be, however, a repudiation of their parents. It might be an indication that they did not have the kind of childhood they wish to give to their children. It may express ambivalence about their childhood. Repudiation of the past, of course, is part of the American way of life. It explains the level of our standard of living and the frightening responsibility placed on parents and teachers.

The American parent has accepted responsibility for his child's ethics, for his capability and for his happiness. This is an awesome assignment.

Childrearing for many American parents has become a troubled and burdensome function. It does, however, contain many challenges and potentials for cultural and individual achievement. Historical perspective, awareness of the demands for social effectiveness at home and abroad and acceptance of the essentials of the American identity suggest that a definite and lasting agreement on principles of childrearing cannot be expected in our culture. In this, as in many other areas of living, there is no peace. There should not be. With such an agreement parents could produce a basic personality type unfit to cope with the demands of changing social situations and changing world conditions. They could produce social incompetence in their children by identifying the mistakes of the past and misleading themselves into the belief that they are preparing for the future. Supervision often falls into this trap unless a systematic tool for analysis is provided.

The next logical step is to orient the goals of childrearing to the predictable demands of the future. Mistakes of the past were made in an attempt to achieve personality characteristics which are obsolete for

today's children. Parents should demand from the child-rearing professions a tieup between the study of individual growth and development and an understanding of history and sociology. This would require more concern with goals than with methods. If the focus is on methods, goals will be de-emphasized. Character neuroses and juvenile delinquency in unexpected places, with unexpected volume, could be the result.

In this context, parents and the child-rearing professions might consider whether the home and school are places for democracy and permissiveness, or whether democracy might be better confined to the government and permissiveness to the therapeutic hour. The democratic ideal spilled over into American child-rearing practices long before free association, catharsis and the expression of hostility became respected therapeutic tools. The school and home have become democratic with human material which essentially is composed of unequals. There is no equality of information between teacher and pupils. There is no equality between parents and children. They are separated irrevocably by age, physiological maturation, social development, experience and concerns. To rear children as if they were equals of their parents and teachers deprives them of appropriate models of behavior. It makes them a source of nagging frustration to the adult, which causes irritation and resentment within the adult. It dooms both the child and the adult to emotional tension and inadequacy of interaction.

These, however, are problems which can often be corrected. Reorientations are required in reality and are within the psychological domain of parents, teachers and supervisors. A consideration of role constructs in child-rearing practices is a starting point in this reorientation. People, with their various roles, do not exist in a vacuum--they develop

in environments filled with cultural pressures. The behavior of each teacher and supervisor is shaped in part by his specific school situation. Since personnel in elementary and secondary schools operate in different settings, their problems and reactions to them are necessarily different. Thus, supervisory services must be interdependent to eliminate needless duplication of effort and to achieve successful supervisory services.

IX. Activity G: Discussion of differences in elementary secondary school services

Group
Time: 20 minutes

School Organization The organizational differences existent between elementary and secondary schools may lead to significant differences in the amount of time the classroom teacher has to spend with individual students. The secondary school teacher spends much less time with students in comparison with the elementary school teacher, who sees each student for a greater portion of the school day.

If the elementary teacher takes advantage of this opportunity, he can aid the supervisor with useful anecdotal material or information about behavioral patterns. Often the secondary teacher can provide this information for only a select number of students, i.e., those who require special help or cause problems. The secondary school can use its environment to solve behavioral problems, e.g., putting students who do not get along in different shifts. At the elementary level this is not usually possible. School organization does influence the supervisory function.

Differentiated Curriculum Another variable affecting supervisors is curriculum. The elementary school curriculum is similar for all students and individual choices are few. When a child takes reading he is told he

will read with the "robins" or "bluebirds"--he does not decide he wants to read with the "peacocks." The secondary student does have a choice of courses. The supervisor usually does not control these choices, although he is in a position to be influential.

Psychological Development of Students Elementary and secondary students differ greatly from a psychological viewpoint. The psychological focus at the elementary level is directed primarily toward making the child feel secure in a nonfamily society. At the junior high level the emphasis is on self-expression and exploration; in the high school the emphasis is on peer relationships, especially heterosexual relationships. The concerns of the supervisor at various grade levels will be influenced by the psychological development of students. Havighurst says developmental tasks fall into three general categories as a result of (a) physical maturation, (b) pressures exerted by the cultural process and (c) values and aspirations of the emerging personality. Interpretations of the culture and acquisition of realistic levels of aspiration are factors the supervisor must be aware of if he is to minimize bias and work effectively.

Concept of Time The elementary student views time as now. The secondary student views time from both the present and future. Students from lower socioeconomic areas tend to be more concerned with the present, regardless of school age. The elementary teacher and supervisor may benefit from exploration of the child's emotional needs; the secondary supervisor may benefit from work with long-range expectancies and consequences. School personnel working with lower socioeconomic children must produce and act rapidly to maintain the students' interest and trust.

Teachers' Perceptions Mangan's study showed that elementary and secondary teachers have different perceptions of their functions and their problems. Perceptions of parochial and public school elementary teachers were more similar than those of public elementary and secondary teachers. Thus, secondary supervisors may have difficulty as elementary supervisors.

Similar school functions include (a) record keeping, (b) testing, (c) inclass behavior, (d) giving information and (e) referrals.

X. Activity H: Discussion about problem-solving steps
Individual reading time: 20 minutes
Group discussion time: 20 minutes

Supervision is the most vital and intimate part of the entire teacher training program. It is not merely lecturing, talking or giving advice. The following discussion between student teacher and supervisor may help exemplify this point. "The group of children I'm working with this year is very difficult. There is one child in particular who causes most of the trouble. Do you think I should remove that child from the group? Do you think this might solve my problem?" The supervisor needs more information to be helpful to the student teacher. This might be analogous to a patient who comes to a doctor and says, "I have had terrible head pains for months. Do you think I might need brain surgery?" A careful diagnostic examination must be made before the doctor can answer this question.

In the above situations the student teacher and the patient anticipated solutions to their problems without considering alternatives and action plans. Several important steps in the problem-solving process were omitted. The following list explains steps in problem solving with particular attention given to the force field technique of diagnosis.

Action-Research Steps of Problem Solving*

1. Identifying a Need For Change Who is causing the problem and who is affected by it? What kind of problem is it? e.g., value conflict, disagreement about goals, poor communication. What specific goals must be attained to resolve the problem and how can goals be reached?

*The five problem-solving steps are an extension and modification of Jung and Lippitt's, "The study of change as a concept in research utilization," Theory Into Practice, Vol. V., No. 1, February 1966.

2. Diagnosing the Problem Situation Once the problem has been clearly stated in terms of operational goals, one should identify the forces operating in the situation which tend to push toward a particular goal and those which push against it. As the forces are identified, it often becomes clear that the original goals which were thought to represent a solution are incorrect or inadequate. New goals must be stated and new forces identified repeatedly as one works toward solution of a problem. Diagnosis is an ongoing process in problem solving.

3. Considering Action Alternatives As diagnostic work progresses, a range of action alternatives should emerge. Forces operating for and against each alternative should be considered. If one or some combination of the alternatives is tried, what will happen to the forces pushing toward and against a particular goal? How will the forces operate to influence the success or failure of a particular action alternative? What are the relative values of the alternatives?

4. Trying Out An Action Plan At this point, one or a combination of the action alternatives will be tried out. As the change effort is made, some means of assessment is needed to evaluate successes and failures of the effort. This involves recognition of dynamics contributing to the changes. Such assessment provides an evaluation of progress and a new diagnostic picture. It suggests future action steps. It also may identify skills which are important for progress.

5. Diffusion and Adaptation Information gained from action experience in dealing with a problem should be shared with others who face similar problems. Information to be diffused should include (a) a concise

statement of the problem, (b) the forces involved in the problem situation, (c) a description of action taken to change the forces, (d) results of action including failures as well as successes, (e) special problems that were encountered and (f) special skills that were needed to carry out particular actions. This information can be adapted to situations of persons with similar concerns.

Continuous diagnosis is an essential part of the action-research steps in problem solving. When diagnosis is incomplete and inadequate the problems in teacher training tend to multiply. Fads often are accepted which do not fit the local situations. Potentially good solutions might be abandoned without realizing the slight changes needed to make them work. Decisions are not made on the facts of the situation, but on one's status or ability to influence others. Helpful innovations in teacher education are rediscovered and die repeatedly when they are not shared effectively.

There are several probable reasons for the lack of good diagnostic work by people who work with student teachers. It is difficult to identify clear goals for helping teachers grow. An engineer can make accurate estimates of the kinds and quantities of materials he needs to build a power dam to produce a given amount of electricity. It is vastly more complicated for a student teacher to determine what experiences will help a child develop a particular trait. Taba's, Gallagher's and Suchman's works, which are attempts at this, are reflected in Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Program 100, Developing Instructional Systems to Improve Teacher Competencies.

Even when goals can be stated concisely, it may be difficult to exchange accurate information in supervisory work with student teachers. The medical doctor listens with his stethescope, views with his x-ray

machine and analyzes with his chemical and electronic equipment. Social scientists are only beginning to provide diagnostic tools and data which are so important in the educator's efforts to learn about children. These include ways to be sensitive to feelings, personal values, attitudes and perceptions and the mutual effect of these on behavior of group members.

Another probable barrier to good diagnostic work is simply lack of awareness of the importance and satisfaction of these efforts. Gathering, synthesizing and planning on the basis of information has not been a primary part of the teacher's role. The greatest support or reward has been for time spent carrying out action, working directly with students or carrying out administrative details.

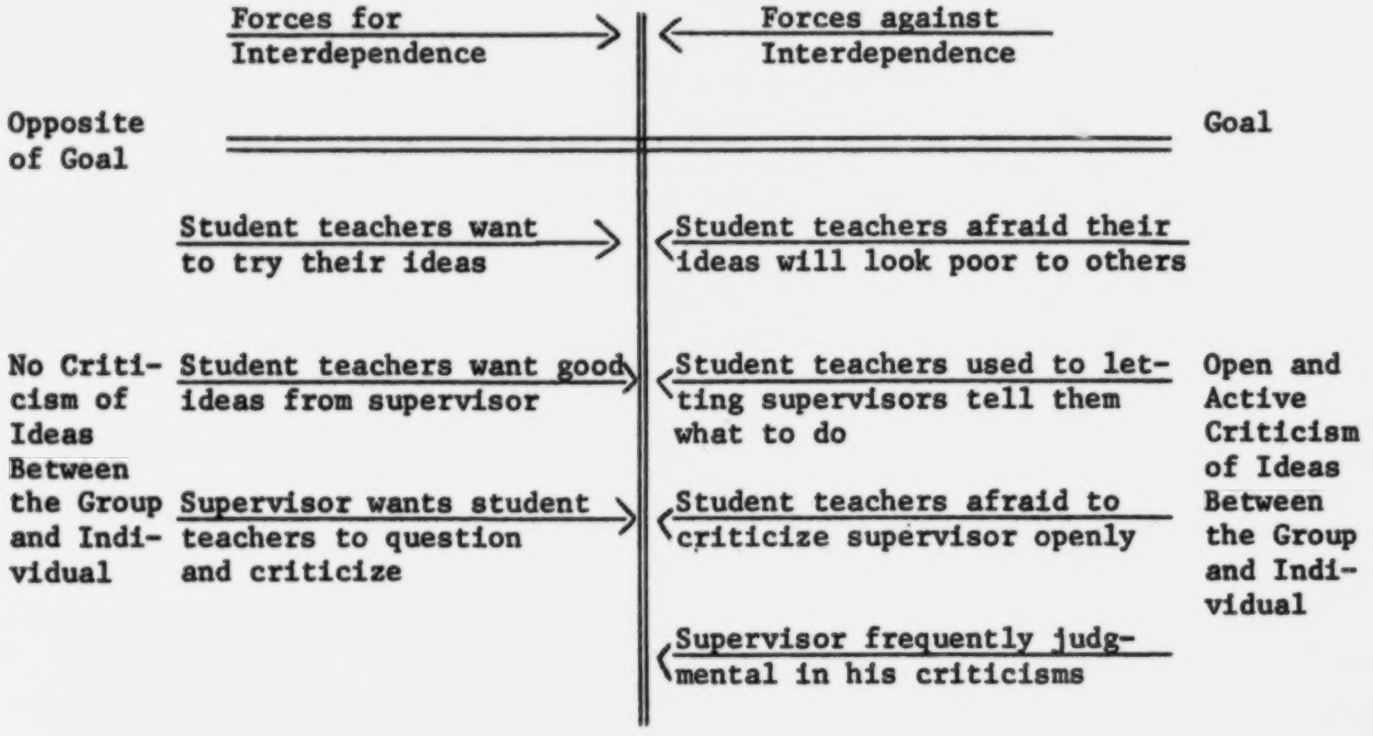
XI. Activity I: Using force field techniques in problem diagnosis

A problem must be stated in terms of a clear goal when using force field techniques. For example: Dr. Jones is a critic, cooperating-or supervisor-trainer who says--

"As a supervisor working with student teachers, I'm concerned about developing interdependence between us. I don't want them to do things just because they are my suggestions. Neither do I want them to reject ideas just because they come from the adult. My two goals for the group are (1) to openly and actively criticize the helpful and nonhelpful aspects of my suggestions and (2) to seek my reactions to their suggestions."

How does one move to a position where such techniques may be used?

Force Field Diagram I


Forces for Interdependence
Forces against Interdependence
Opposite of Goal
Goal
Student teachers want to try their ideas
Student teachers afraid their ideas will look poor to others
No Criticism of Ideas Between the Group and Individual
Student teachers want good ideas from supervisor
Student teachers used to letting supervisors tell them what to do
Supervisor wants student teachers to question and criticize
Student teachers afraid to criticize supervisor openly
Supervisor frequently judgmental in his criticisms
Open and Active Criticism of Ideas Between the Group and Individual

Observing a short-duration lesson simultaneously with a group of students might indicate some value differences between teachers and students, as well as among the students themselves. Following is a sample of such a lesson.

Force Field Diagram II

Problem for Student Teacher: Teach a new alphabet so three out of four students can spell every word correctly in two out of three test sentences.

Problem for Supervisor: Identify focal factors which (1) impeded the chances of success and (2) those which were in favor of the student teacher.

Forces For	Forces Against	Focal Concern
Education courses Psychology background Research	Children need rough treatment Select student most like student teacher to participate	A) Social class considerations
		B) Content management
		C) Emotional climate control
		D) Time use
		E) Other

Participants might do the following after going through Diagram II:

1. Identify similarities within each focal concern
2. Discuss reasons for the similarities
3. Rank independently the focal concerns--Number One would contain the force field believed to best facilitate reaching of the stated goals
4. Construct a detailed force field around the focal concern area considered most important by each (10 minutes)
5. Discuss specifics within the individual's lesson with another participant. (5 minutes)

XII. Evaluation of Activities: Field Paper 1

Each participant is asked to give personal responses concerning the effectiveness of this workshop. This feedback will be helpful for revisions of format, content and presentation of the material. Please use this sheet for your comments and return it to the area or person designated by the leader. Time allotted for the evaluation should not exceed 30 minutes.

A. Which activity (by letter) did you like the best? _____ Why?

B. Which activity (by letter) did you like the least? _____ Why?

C. What was your response to the content and presentation of the activities? (Might include time allowed for each, clearness of directions, appropriateness of subject matter and examples used.)

D. What suggestions would you make for improving this workshop?